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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EB/TPP/MTA/MST, IO/T, AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [HO](#) [WTO](#) [UNESCO](#)

SUBJECT: HONDURAS SHARES CONCERNS OVER VAGUE UNESCO DRAFT

REF: State 238056

1. Post delivered reftel talking points to Ambassador Mario Fortin, Director of Foreign Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and to Norman Garcia, Minister of Trade and Industry, on November 8. EconOff then raised the points in a meeting with Minister Garcia and other Trade Ministry officials on November 9, and confirmed, as suggested in reftel, that Trade Ministry officials were indeed entirely unaware of the UNESCO negotiation or its potential implications for a country's international trade obligations.

2. In response, Honduran Trade Ministry officials contacted their counterparts at the Ministry of Culture, Art and Sports responsible for the UNESCO negotiations. Together, they drafted a report outlining the potential trade-related ramifications of the UNESCO draft and presented this report to Director of Trade Policy Melvin Redondo on November 19. Speaking with EconOff on November 23, Redondo stated that while he does not see precisely how the agreement would impact a signatory's international trade obligations, the very fact that the language in the current draft is so vague and open-ended raises the concern that it might. Redondo stated that Honduras does not favor approval of such a vaguely worded document, and assured EconOff that the Trade Ministry will stay engaged as negotiations proceed so that their concerns will be addressed.

Palmer